

BOARD OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF THE
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07102

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For Immediate Release: June 10, 1975

NEWS RELEASE

In a statement issued today, June 10, 1975, Newark Schools Superintendent, Stanley Taylor, described what he termed a "crisis in school leadership within the Newark Public Schools. In a statement that was described by the Superintendent as the first time he has attempted to take this important issue in education directly to the people of the City of Newark, Mr. Taylor sounded a strong alarm for what he termed "the silent forces of good and decent commitments to educational improvement" to come forward.

Reading from a prepared statement, the Superintendent said the following:

The Public Schools of this country are in crisis. Public education has been asked to take up, and in many cases replace, the role of home and church that many of us grew up believing constituted the whole of socialization. The school system, itself, has failed because of its institutional inability to cope with the changing demands for creative and functional leadership. Moreover, the failure of the system may be seen in the behavior of those entrusted by the people to head it in meeting the challenges of this important area of leadership. It is to this behavior that I wish to address my comments.

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For 20 months, I have been able to observe and study both the nature of my challenge here and the nature of those forces within the system that would have me fail. I have abided administrative interference by the leadership of the Board of Education itself. In this respect, I have had to sit back and witness employees on my staff answer directly to the leadership of the Board, often ignoring directives given by me in order to act out a loyalty to those with no responsibility or authority to demand such action. I will not, and cannot be expected to tolerate this situation any longer.

The many instances of insubordination, by Board employees, possible collusion on many levels, flagrant abuse of power by Board leadership, instances of administrative interference that stymie the professional processes of educating our youngsters, must stop.

The crisis in the classroom can only be stopped by making the children in the classroom our top priority. We must eradicate power plays, the abuse of whatever office, professional slander, half-truths and misinformation. Our youngsters cannot afford to have these very expensive games played at their expense.

The recent incident of unauthorized distribution of slanderous and libelous literature only indicates the low level and sickness of the attack against our children. Persons lobbying for or against those forces in our community that would help us do the important job confronting us need understand that the nature of our struggle here is serious and the depth of our commitment is beyond personal vendetta, personal gain, or personal power.

I will move to bring charges against those persons who participate, or have participated in these illegal acts and who break Board Rules and Regulations--and who violate the trust of their positions.

(more)

Add to:

I will move decisively to protect the plight of the 74,000 children of Newark from those persons who use Board monies, equipment, supplies and hours of employment to lobby for their personal gain. I call upon those members of the Board of Education whose voices have been largely silent but whose commitment to positive change and the reform of this school system, to join me in making everyone who is involved, either directly or indirectly, to be held accountable for their actions. I also call upon the municipal and moral leadership of our community to speak out and be heard on this issue that goes well beyond the walls of our schools and extends to the very heart of our entire city.